

of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Drew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Drew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Drew Kelly for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. PETE G. MEHAS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Pete G. Mehas, Fresno County Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Mehas is retiring at the end of his current term and his unwavering commitment to students and education will be missed, but never forgotten.

Like many others, I consider myself fortunate to count Pete Mehas as a friend and advisor. His life's work embodies the very basic values—hard work, respect for people and family—that make it possible for a person to have a profound influence on others.

Pete Mehas was born, raised and educated in Fresno, California. Growing up he worked during the 40s and 50s for his father at the Fresno Malt Shop and the Athenian Restaurant. At age 19 Pete hitchhiked around the world on a personal odyssey of discovery and cultural exploration. Over the years, the call of family and his pride of heritage have drawn him back to his ancestral homeland, the magnificent Greek Islands. But Pete Mehas has always come back to the Central Valley where he spent his professional career advancing education on many fronts, in classrooms, boardrooms and the legislative halls of Sacramento and our nation's capitol.

During his career, Pete has been a teacher, a coach, a school principal, an associate district superintendent and a legislative advocate. His efforts on behalf of education have been driven by his often-stated belief that, "Children are the living message we send to a time we will not see." His personal objective has always been to serve as a model of high values, coupled with strong character and love of country and to hopefully pass those standards on to the next generation.

Pete has never let his success go to his head. In fact, to this day he continues to visit classrooms to read to young students and encourage them to succeed. His utter lack of pretense has been a hallmark of his career and made it possible for him to inspire others and bring people together.

Elected four times to the position of Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, Pete Mehas' well-documented career dedication to education has been recognized many times by others. He has participated in Presidential Education Summits on education, served as an education policy advisor to three California governors and held leadership positions in nu-

merous education organizations and associations. Pete's many honors include being the first recipient in 1990 of the Fresno Public Education Fund's Gold Star Alumni Award. And his leadership has been praised by organizations as varied as the California Farm Bureau Federation and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

Beyond the honors that have come his way as his professional success multiplied over the years, Pete Mehas has always been devoted to his family. His mother Sylvia, his wife Demi, sisters Tula and Georgia and his daughters Alethea and Andreanna have enriched his life as only family can.

And though Pete Mehas has talked with world leaders, Presidents, Governors and business leaders, I know nothing compares to the loving sound he hears from his twin granddaughters, Andreanna and Isabella, when they whisper "pappou", Greek for "grandpa", in his ear.

Though he will soon retire as Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, there can be no uncertainty that Pete Mehas will continue to make a valuable contribution to his community, state and nation. Pete's future efforts will, I am sure, be reflective of his personal philosophy which is summed up so well in the words of his favorite songwriter, Jimmy Buffet, when he sings, "Yesterdays are over my shoulder, so I can't look back for too long. There's just too much to see waiting in front of me, and I know that I just can't go wrong."

CONGRATULATING ISRAEL'S
MAGEN DAVID ADOM SOCIETY

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in congratulating Magen David Adom, Israel's national emergency medical service, as a fully admitted and recognized member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. This 60-year effort to win membership for Israel's humanitarian society solely on the basis the MDA uses the Star of David as its symbol.

Since its founding in 1930, MDA has been a leading participant in international humanitarian relief efforts and in training and instruction in emergency services techniques. Regrettably, the organization has been denied full membership in the International Committee for the Red Cross, ICRC, because of anti-Israel bias among countries that refuse to recognize the State of Israel or the symbol of the Star of David. This political discrimination is in direct violation of the ICRC principle of maintaining neutrality and impartiality in conflicts.

MDA has been a committed humanitarian society embodying all the goals and ideals of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. MDA has been an impartial force in the international community helping victims all over the world after the Southeast Asian tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, disastrous flooding of the River Danube in Romania, even helping those considered enemies of Israel. But for 60 years, Israel was denied membership. There was no good reason for MDA to be forced to wait this long to be a member of ICRC when their ef-

forts are solely humanitarian and separate from the decades-old political conflict existing in the Middle East.

The process of International recognition has been a long and arduous process tainted by discrimination allowing politics to outweigh the humanitarian objectives of the MDA. A diplomatic conference in Geneva in December 2005 was a significant step in the process of enabling MDA to finally become a full member in the International Committee of the Red Cross. On December 8, 2005 the signatory countries to the Geneva Conventions approved a Third Additional Protocol establishing a new neutral Red Crystal emblem by a vote of 98 in favor, 27 against, with 10 abstentions. After all these years, the Syrian delegation still tried to stall the vote, but in the end was unable to prevent the adoption of the Third Protocol.

I am pleased that this longstanding injustice has been rectified and MDA is permitted to conduct international humanitarian operations under a third neutral symbol. We should not allow decades old disputes and larger, unrelated political problems in the Middle East to impede the work of Israel's humanitarian aid society.

I also take this time to applaud the efforts of U.S. diplomats and American organizations for bringing the issue of MDA's exclusion from the ICRC to the focus of the international community. Without U.S. leadership on this important issue and the pressure that both our leaders and the American Red Cross put on the ICRC, this wrong that has existed since Israel's founding would not have been redressed. Our country understood that we should not allow politics to prevail over humanitarian efforts in any country no matter what the political climate or religious beliefs are. I also thank the American Red Cross for its continued support to help open the channels for MDA's acceptance in the ICRC. I fully support the decision of the American Red Cross, since 2000, to protest the exclusion of MDA by withholding \$42 million in annual dues from ICRC. Finally, I would like to thank Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, for its efforts lobbying Congress and working with the U.N. and the American Red Cross in support of MDA.

MDA should never have been linked to the fate of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and with the adoption of a third neutral symbol will be able to fulfill its humanitarian mission. The adoption of a neutral symbol is a celebration that humanitarian principles have triumphed above politics and bigotry.

HONORING TIM FRIEDMAN

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2006

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, today I want to honor Tim Friedman, who will be retiring after 30 years of service in the Democratic Cloakroom. My staff and I rely on the Cloakroom on a daily basis. The Cloakroom staff is reliable and knowledgeable and serves as the voice of reason during often chaotic times on the floor. Tim Friedman was a big part of the Cloakroom operations and I know my colleagues and I will miss seeing him everyday.

But his retirement is certainly well-earned and I hope he enjoys the next chapter in his life.

TRIBUTE TO RABBI MICHAEL
ROBINSON

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend Rabbi Michael Robinson who died July 20, 2006, surrounded by friends and family at his home in Sebastopol, California.

Mr. Speaker, this is the second time I have risen to honor this unique man who has dedicated his life to the cause of social justice at home and around the world. On the last occasion, several years ago Rabbi Robinson received a civil liberties award from the ACLU of Sonoma County recognizing a lifetime of achievements and his passionate advocacy for civil rights. From the American civil rights movement to the Nicaraguan Contra war to the Israel-Palestinian conflict Michael Robinson has been on the front lines promoting peace and the improvement of humanity.

Born in North Carolina, Michael received his B.A. from the University of Cincinnati and attended North Carolina State College before enlisting in the Navy during World War II. He served in the Pacific and became a pacifist immediately after this experience.

In 1952, after completing a course of study at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Michael became the first North Carolina native to be ordained as a rabbi. He later earned his doctoral degree from the New York Theological Seminary and served in temples in Seaside and Pomona as well as 29 years as an activist leader at Temple Israel in Westchester, New York. During the civil rights movement, the synagogue raised money to help rebuild the black churches that had been burned in the South and finance the van used by the Freedom Riders to tour the South. Michael marched with Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, and expressed his convictions with these words: "When I was ten years old I began sitting on the back seat of the bus with 'colored people.' I never returned to the front seat."

After moving to Sonoma County with his wife Ruth, Michael served Shomrei Torah, and is credited with growing the congregation from 30 families to now the largest Jewish congregation (175) in Santa Rosa, CA. Retired since 1996, Rabbi Robinson holds the title of Rabbi Emeritus at both Temple Israel and Shomrei Torah.

In addition to promoting affirmative action, same sex marriage, affordable housing, and other equality issues, Michael has worked against nuclear war, apartheid, and all forms of injustice. He is known locally for his involvement in the Sonoma County Task Force on Homelessness, Children's Village, the Living Wage Coalition, Habitat for Humanity, the Sonoma County Peace and Justice Center, and the Sonoma Land Trust.

A founding Member of Angry White Guys for Affirmative Action in 1996, Michael's words still resonate: "I hope that my anger will not dissipate until justice is done and every man, woman and child has equal access to all the

privileges of a democratic society and receives equal respect."

Michael is survived by his wife Ruth, his sister Leah Karpen, his daughters Jude and Sharon, and 3 grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I share Rabbi Michael Robinson's hope that we as a nation can become better people and create a just society. And I join with his family and friends in the belief that we can best honor his life by making the work of peace and social justice a priority in our own lives.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT COLONEL
RICHARD E. NICHOLS, JR.

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize LTC Richard E. Nichols, Jr. The Lieutenant Colonel is retiring from the United States Army after 24 years of distinguished service.

Lieutenant Colonel Nichols spent his early years growing up in the heartland of Kansas and Missouri. While attending Missouri Western State College in St. Joseph, Missouri, he made the decision to serve his country in the United States Army and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Field Artillery in 1982. Upon graduating from Missouri Western State College in 1983 with a bachelor of science degree in business administration, Lieutenant Colonel Nichols served in the Kansas Army National Guard as the Reconnaissance and Survey Platoon Leader for the 2nd/130th Field Artillery Battalion in Hiawatha, Kansas.

Lieutenant Colonel Nichols went on to serve in various posts over the next 24 years. During his service he was assigned to C Battery, 1/76th Field Artillery, 3rd Infantry Division, in Bamberg, Germany, and as the commander of B Battery, 6th Field Artillery, which deployed in support of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm from 1989 to 1991. In these roles and under various posts in Kansas, Alabama, and Virginia, Lieutenant Colonel Nichols has earned numerous awards and decorations. Among these awards are the Meritorious Service Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Superior Unit Award, the National Defense Service Medal with service star, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, the Saudi Arabia Liberation of Kuwait Service Medal, the Emirate of Kuwait Liberation of Kuwait Service Medal, and the Overseas Service Ribbon.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing LTC Richard E. Nichols, Jr., an outstanding leader in the United States Army. His years of service and dedication in protecting the freedom of the United States has been an inspiration to many. I commend him for his many years of service and I am honored to represent him and his family in the United States Congress.

COMMENDING THE INDUSTRIAL
EMERGENCY COUNCIL

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the invaluable services offered by the Industrial Emergency Council (IEC) in my district. I had the great honor recently to meet with this group and I was very impressed with their zeal and loyalty to the citizens of California. The IEC is a non-profit organization founded by several hardworking and dedicated constituents in the 1970s. They provide training and assessment programs that help prepare local businesses for emergency responses to industrial accidents and natural disasters. In a part of the country where earthquakes, flash floods and other disasters often have devastating effects, the IEC takes public safety seriously by educating at-risk federal, industrial, corporate and academic installations about the dangers they confront.

The Council is comprised of commendable and experienced membership. Its founder, James O'Donnell, served as Battalion Chief and Fire Marshall of the San Carlos Fire Department and is a leader hazardous materials planning. Other members include: John Paine, a consultant to the gas industry for over thirty years; Mark Green, the founder of an environmental consulting group; Paul Stanley, the facility manager for a large bay-area pharmaceutical company; Richard Foster, the former city manager for Foster City and Jack Leslie, former Battalion Chief of the Palo Alto Fire Department. These career professionals have pooled their respective knowledge and experience managing industrial hazards and now generously share their expertise on a volunteer basis.

In response to a variety of client needs, the IEC provides a wide array of services. They offer several specially tailored training services for employees, ranging from Emergency Medical training to Hazardous Materials and Waste operations. They help work with industrial facilities to assess the natural and technological risks to their operations. In addition, IEC assists clients in the execution of comprehensive action plans designed to address identified hazards.

IEC's vision was best realized in the formation of the San Mateo County Hazardous Materials Response Plan. In 1984, the Council organized a response unit to classify the actual and potential threats in the county. This unparalleled endeavor won national recognition as a commendably comprehensive plan, serving 18 separate jurisdictions in the state. Even though the industrial emphasis in my district has shifted towards biotech and hi-tech industries, the response unit remains important in dealing with hazardous materials.

To adjust to the emerging threats against our homeland security, the IEC organized a weapons of mass destruction exercise in early 2005, designed for first responders. Over 1000 members of law enforcement, fire and public works received vital joint training, which stressed information sharing among different personnel. The entire endeavor was hugely successful thanks to the unwavering enthusiasm of our dedicated public servants at the IEC.